

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MILAN 00644 01 OF 02 082357Z

ACTION EUR-08

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R 081510Z APR 77

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

SECSTATE WASHDC 5342

INFO VICENZA - GENERAL PUTNAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MILAN 0644

LIMDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, PINT, IT

SUBJECT: THE SECURITY SITUATION.

1. GENERAL EDOARDO POLOMBI, COMMANDER OF THE CARABINIERI FOR ALL NORTHERN ITALY, IS THE SOUND, SCOTCH DRINKING, HARD BITTEN HEAD OF THE ONLY ITALIAN POLICE LOCALLY GIVEN MUCH CREDIT FOR MATTERING AS FAR AS STATE SECURITY IS CONCERNED. HE IS ALSO THE ONLY LOCAL SECURITY OFFICIAL, SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF THE GROUND CORPS COMMANDER ANZA LAST 76 MILAN 2773 IN WHOSE CANDOR AND JUDGMENT I HAVE MUCH CONFIDENCE.

2. PALOMBI SAID THAT KIDNAPPING OF DE MARTINO IN NAPLES COULD BE IMPORTANT TURNING POINT. LESS BECAUSE HE IS FIRST POLITICAL PARTY VICTIM BUT BECAUSE PSI MAY NOW REACT TO PERMIT TOUGHER POLICE MEASURES WHICH IT HAS IN PAST ALWAYS OPPOSED. NOT THAT THIS ALONE WOULD DO THE TRICK. IT COULD HELP OVERCOME WEAKNESS OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IF PSI WOULD REA-ENTER GOVERNMENT. OTHERWISE, PALOMBI ADDED GRIMLY, COOUNTRY WILL INSIST ON GOVERN-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MILAN 00644 01 OF 02 082357Z

MENT INCLUDING COMMUNISTS. THAT WOULD ASSURE GOVERNMENT WITH AUTHORITY AND WOULD STOP VIOLENCE. BUT, HE WOULD RESIGN RATHER THAN SERVE UNDER SUCH A GOVERNMENT. OTHERS, HOWEVER, MORE DEPENDENT ON JOB, WOULD NOT AND AN AUTHORITIAN STATE WOULD BE INSTALLED.

3. ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT WAS, HE INSISTED, AS WEAK AS RAIN WATER. HE DID NOT GET THE BACKING AND AUTHORITY NEEDED TO DO HIS JOB.

(THIS HAS LONG BEEN PALOMBI'S COMPLAINT - SEE 76 MILAN 2724).

4. THE TERRORISM SWEEPING ITALY'S IS A VERY GRAVE THREAT TO GOVERNMENT. PALOMBI SAID. THE DE MARTINO KIDNAPPING AND THE APRIL 7 BOMBING OF MINISTER OF INTERIOR COSSIGA'S OFFICE WERE DEADLY SERIOUS. THE LATTER WAS NO JOKE. IT WAS DELIVERATE DEMONSTRATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STATE TO PROTECT ITSELF.

5. BEHIND THESE ACTS OF TERRORISM, INCLUDING THE ROME AND BOLOGNA STUDENT RIOTS, LIES A WELL-LED AND WELL-THOUGHT-OUT CAMPAIGN TO DESTROY THE EXISTING ITALIAN STATE, HE ARGUED. HE COULD MAKE THAT STATEMENT BECAUSE THE CARABINERI RAN THE BEST INTERLLIGENCE OPERATION IN ITALY AND THE NORTHERN ITALIAN OPERATION WAS UNDER HIS COMMAND. MOREOVER, THE MAIN-SPRING FOR THE MOMENT WERE IN MILAN, TURIN, PADUA AND TRENTO.

6. ON THE BASIS OF LARGE AMOUNTS OF CORRESPONDANCE, DOCUMENTATION AND INDIVIDUAL CASE HISTORIES, PALOMBI CONCLUDED THAT THERE WAS A TIGHTLY RUN ORGANIZATION OF FAR LEFT MARXISTS COMMITTED TO DESTROY THE STATE. THEY WERE LINEAL DESCENDANTS OF THE ANARACHISTS, MAXIMALIST SOCIALIST, TROTSKYITE MOVEMENTS OF THE PAST. THEY CONSIDERED THE PCI AND THE TRADE UNIONS TRAITORS OF THE WORKING CLASS AND BELIEVED THERE WAS NO HOPE TO LIBERATE ITALY FROM THE OPPRESSION OF THE RICH AND ENTRENCHED BUT VILENCE. AND IT WAS AIMED AT THE POLICE, THE GOVERNMENT, COURTS AND INSTITUTIONS TO REDUCE THE STATE TO IMPOTENCE. THE KIDNAPPINGS AND BANK ROBBERIES WERE DESIGNED BOTH TO RAISE MONEY TO FINANCE THE TERRORISM AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISCREDITING OF THE STATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MILAN 00644 01 OF 02 082357Z

7. THE LEADERSHIP WAS PRIMARILY UNIVERSITY FACULTY LEVEL INTELLECTUALS, PRIMARILY SPUN OFF FROM UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY WHICH WAS THE SEED BED OF POST-WAR ITALIAN ANARCHO-RADICALISM. THIS WAS THE BACKBONE OF THE BRIGATE ROSSE (BR). IN ADDITION, THE NUCLEI PROLETARI DI AZIONI (NAP) WERE A SOUTHERN ITALIAN INVENTION MADE UP OF LESS INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTIONARIES WHO SEE THE CRIMINAL WORLD AS A RESERVOIR OF REVOLUTIONARY MANPOWER. AT PRESENT, THE BR PROVIDES THE BRAINS AND THE NAP THE GUNMEN. BOTH HAVE AS THEIR GOAL THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE EXISTING STATE.

8. PALOMBI DOUBTED THAT FOREIGN FINANCING WAS INVOLVED. THE TERRORIST HAD AMPLE FUNDS FROM THEIR KIDNAPPING AND ROBBERIES. AND WHY RISKN THOSE IF THEY HAD FOREIGN FUNDS?

9. SOLUTION TO PRESENT SECURITY CRISIES WAS NOT EASY. IT WAS NOT ONLY A POWERLESS CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. IT WAS ALSO A LACK OF ADEQUATE CARABINERI AND OF QUALITY CARABINERI. RECRUITMENT

WAS DRAGGING BECAUSE WAGES WERE TOO LOW. THERE WAS A PREVALANCE
OF SOUTHERN ITALIAN RECRUITS WHO WERE SIMPLY NOT ADEQUATELY EDUCATED
AND LACKED THE YEOMAN VIRTUES THAT HAD MARKED THE CARABINIERI
SINCE PIEDMONT DOMINATED THE CORPS. MOREOVER, THE PRISONS
WERE OVER CROWDED AND ARE POWDER KEGS. THE COURTS WERE SHOT
THROUGH WITH REVOLUTIONARY SYMPATHIZERS, JUSTICE HOPELESSLY SLOW AND
THE HANDS OF THE POLICE TIED BY CIVIL LIBERTIES RULES.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 MILAN 00644 02 OF 02 090020Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MILAN 0644

LIMDIS

NOFORN

10. PALOMBI WARNED THAT HIS ANALYSIS OF THE NATURE OF THE
THREAT WAS NOT SHARED BY ALL OF HIS SUPERIORS IN ROME. BUT
HE HAD LIVED WITH THIS PROBLEM FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES AND
THOUGHT THE ACCUMULATED EVIDENCE WAS OVERWHELMING FOR ANYONE
READY AND PATIENT ENOUGH TO SIFT THROUGH IT.

11. COMMENT: PALOMBI IS NO WILD-EYED LIBERAL. HE TALKS LIKE
A VERY SORELY TRIED BUT INTELLECTUAL POLICE OFFICER IMPATIENT
WITH THE RESTRAINTS OF NEGLECT, BUDGET AND CIVIL RIGHTS THAT
HANDICAP HIS TASK. BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT OF HIS LOYALTY TO
THE DEMOCRATIC STATE WHICH HE SEES UNDER INCREASINGLY HEAVY
SEIGE. I CANNOT JUDGE THE TEMPER OF THE ENTIRE LOMBARDY ESTABLISH-
MENT. BUT I SHARE PALOMBI'S VIEW THAT ONE RESULT OF THE CONTINUING
TERRORISM AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IS TO INCREASE THE RECEPTIVITY OF
THE PUBLIC TO A GREATER PCI ROLE IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. PERHAPS
THE CLEAREST SIGN OF WHICH WAS THE CORRIERE DELLA SERA FRONT
PAGE EDITORIAL OF APRIL 7. IT CONCLUDED THAT THE ONLY DEFENSE

AGAINST ITALY'S GUERILLA WARFORAE WAS "TO CONCENTRATE ALL EFFORT
AND ALL WILL ON ESSENTIAL AIMS: REVIVAL OF THE ECONOMY AND
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PAGE 02 MILAN 00644 02 OF 02 090020Z

GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC REFORM OF THE STATES TO ENABLE IT TO
OVERCOME THE LINGERING THREAT OF THE PAST (I.E.FASCISM). SO FAR
THAT APPEAL HAS NOT BEEN LISTENED TO. NOW THEREIS REALLY NO
MORE TIME."
FINA

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